No Objection to Declassification in Full 2010/07/12 : LOC-HAK-158-2-40-0

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

HAK Scowcroft LL

FBIS 44

ISRAELI PAPER CITES FORD'S REMARKS ON GOLAN HEIGHTS

TA151333 TEL AVIV HA'ARETZ IN HEBREW 15 JUN 75 P 1 TA MORI C03212866

(BY DAN MARGALIT, HA'ARETZ CORRESPONDENT)

(EXCERPT) SOME EMBARASSMENT AROSE AT THE WORKING DINNER WHICH PRESIDENT FORD AND PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN GAVE AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, WHEN THOSE PRESENT STARTED TO TALK ABOUT THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. CONGRESSMAN WAYNE HAYS SAID THAT "WERE I AN ISRAELI I WOULD DEMAND THAT ANY PRIME MINISTER WHO GAVE UP THE GOLAN HEIGHTS BE TRIED BEFORE A CRIMINAL COURT." AT THIS POINT PRESIDENT FORD INTERVENED WITH THE REMARK THAT NO ONE EXPECTED ISRAEL TO ABANDON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. A SHORT SILENCE PREVAILED, WHILE FORD AND RABIN LOOKED AT DR. KISSINGER TO SEE HIS REACTION. IT SEEMED TO MANY THAT HE WAS EMBARASSED.

AFTERWARDS AN EFFORT WAS MADE TO PREVENT THIS DISLOG FROM LEAKING OUT. UNOFFICIAL U.S. SOURCES TOLD A HA'ARETZ CORRESPONDENT AN FRIDAY THAT EVEN IF FORD HAD SAID THE THINGS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM, IT DOES NOT RULE OUT U.S. SUPPORT OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR A FURTHER INTERIM SETTLEMENT WITH SYRIA, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE GOLAN HEIGHTS.

OBSERVERS IN WASHINGTON EXPRESSED THEIR OPINION THAT FORD'S REMARK, WHICH WAS KEPT A SECRET, APPARENTLY REFLECTS THE TRUE OPINION OF THE PRESIDENT AS REGARDS THE FUTURE OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS.

AND MORE ON THE GOLAN: IN RABIN'S TALKS IN WASHINGTON, AMERICANS DID NOT LINK AN ADDITIONAL AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT WITH A SETTLEMENT ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. OBSERVERS THINK THAT THE LINK BETWEEN THE TWO SUBJECT IS UNAVOIDABLE, BUT THAT WASHINGTON HAS NOT LINKED THEM BECAUSE IT DID NOT WANT TO MAKE THINGS TOO DIFFICULT FOR RABIN.

ISRAEL'S POSITION IS THAT SINCE SYRIA WILL NOT BE SATISFIED WITH MORE COSMETIC CHANGES BUT WILL DEMAND A MEANINGFUL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO REACH AN INTERIM AGREEMENT. ISRAEL DOES NOT SHUT THE DOOR TO THIS SORT OF A POSSIBILITY BUT, NEVERTHELESS, THINKS THAT FROM THE PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW ONE SHOULD WAIT, IN REGARD TO THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, FOR NEGOTIATION FOR FINAL PEACE.

16 JUN 1423Z ST/SAJ

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